

SOURCES OF LOVE AND HATE

149

them—every night. She is now a picture of health, round, rosy, and as happy and busy as can be. She has gained two pounds in the last three months/'

5. " My baby girl of 18 months has developed a funny habit: when she is in her bed or pram she shakes the bed, and, lying on her face, bumps herself up and down straight on for perhaps three minutes at a time. Then she sings and crows and off again with this peculiar bumping. It has suddenly dawned on me that this is a real ' bad habit'. I called in the doctor and he says we must divert her attention and prevent her from doing it. This is not easy as she generally does it after she is settled in the evening in her cot. Baby is inclined to ' play with herself ' too when she has the chance/'

6. " My eldest little girl, aged 3;6, has got into the wretched habit of masturbation, and I do so wonder what is the best way to deal with it. She started it over a year ago, but for the last six months she appeared to have forgotten it, but now this last week it has broken out again, worse than ever. When first put to bed is the worst time, but she will do it any time if left alone. One of us always sits with her at rest time, and she threads beads, etc. She knows it is ' naughty' but doesn't seem able to make the effort to overcome it."

7. " I am now going to ask your help in a problem of my little charge, aged 5, a girl. Ever since I have been with her (about eighteen months) I have noticed she has very bad habits which try how I might she does not give up, namely, nail biting, nose picking and eating, and lastly and most worrying, she is continually playing with herself—in bed especially, although I give her toys to cuddle. I have never scolded her for it, but have told her that nice little girls don't do those things, but I don't keep at her about it in case she is attracted too much to her faults. N/s mummie says every little girl does it, but I had two little girls before I had N. and

they did not."

8. "I should like to ask your advice with regard to my little girl (age 3;g) who has contracted the habit of masturbation. This condition began about two years ago—and for the last 9 months I resorted to splints for her legs at night. This treatment resulted in the habit occurring during the day—if she was left alone to play—while previously it had only been noticed at bed time and during her afternoon rest. A few weeks ago I took her to a psychologist and nerve specialist—who advised me to discontinue the splints and her afternoon rest. I stay with her at night until she's asleep. My Nannie is with her constantly during the day (but without appearing to watch her) only seeing that she is occupied or interested. The